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AGRICULTURAL REPORT.

From the 20th March to the 20th April, 1815.

The weather has been so dry during the last and present month, that all the oats and a great part of the barley crops have been got into the ground in good time. Latterly the soil has been too dry for sowing flaxseed, and that part of the spring work seems at a stand, few people chusing to sow until there is some prospect of rain. On that account principally, and not from any redundancy of the article, flaxseed has experienced a dull sale. Those who were so provident as to save seed last year, have had a great advantage over those who depended on the foreign supply; and a few farmers, who saved it in a proper manner, by stacking the flax, have produced seed of so superior a quality as to command a sale in the markets, at a much higher price than any foreign seed would bring; and by their showing others what could be done in that way, in this country, have excited a general desire to follow the example, especially in those districts where a preference has always been given to Riga or other northern seed. The flax of American seed, being more liable to that distemper called firing, can seldom be allowed to stand until the seed comes to maturity.

The wheat crops continue to look well; and if the succeeding part of the season prove favourable, will give an abundant produce. The early sown oats, and those sown in autumn, have also a good appearance in general. The very dry weather, and frosts at night, with cold easterly winds, are likely to check the flax crops.

Wheat and oats have experienced a considerable reduction in price, in the course of the last month. Oatmeal, which at one time brought thirty shillings per hundred, is now selling from 22 shillings to 24; and potatoes now appear to be in greater abundance than was expected in the early part of the season.

A correspondent in the neighbourhood of Antrim sends the following account.

On the 6th of May, 1812, having three Cork-red potatoes, that contained 64 sets or eyes, I cut each eye through the centre, making the sets out of three potatoes 128, which I planted with the plough, in the common drill way. I gave them no other care or attention than the other potatoes in the same three acre field; and the drills in which they were set, were equal to any in the field, and superior to most. When raised at November, they produced 5 stone 5 pounds weight.

I am making a similar experiment on a larger scale this year.

 COMMERCIAL REPORT.

Trade, at all times uncertain, and attended by the vicissitudes incident to all human affairs, has for some years past been rendered more than usually uncertain, by the circumstances of a war, in which it has been the policy of the belligerents reciprocally to direct their destructive energies against the trade of the other: war being now fully as much a question of finance, as of military prowess, and the finances of a nation being especially founded on commerce and manufactures. Trade, being interrupted in its usual course, opened for itself a deceptive channel for a time, in wild and daring speculations. This new channel soon failed, to the ruin of some, and the great loss of many more. We know what has happened among ourselves; and the losses which have befallen our own merchants may be taken as a sample, by no means an aggravated one, of the general state of the trade of the Empire; for Belfast cannot be considered as having been more unsuccessful than the average of other places; and it is well known that large sums have been lost by our merchants, in the course of the last five years. Some have gained, but the losses of others have been so considerable, as probably rather to turn the general balance to the side of loss, than of profit.

Liverpool also comes in for a full share of distress from the war. The great trade with America is nearly annihilated, and the increase of pauperism is feelingly detailed in an extract from the *Liverpool Mercury*, placed among the Occurrences, at page

341. It becomes necessary to hold up such statements to public view, to abate the ardour for war, and to point out faithfully the numerous ills entailed by it on the community.

The limitation of bank discounts in London has occasioned, within a few months, a fall on many articles of merchandize and manufactures, in some instances in that market, to the amount of 10 per cent. Bankers, in most other places, have also been careful to restrict discounts: a practice, which, although in some instances it may have borne hard on individuals, has had probably, on the whole, a salutary effect, by restraining speculation, and limiting a too extended circulation of our paper currency.

The limitation of discounts may also have had a small tendency to produce the reduction of the premium on guineas; but the chief cause must be sought in the restoration of trade with the continent of Europe. If the open for trade is only temporary, a greater rise on the value of guineas may be expected.

Among the Documents, at pages 323 and 324, are placed two advertisements, the one relating to frauds practised in London, in relation to forcing sales of linens in that market, and the other pointing out the injury trade sustains by the prevalent practice of auctioneering. They discover the shifts to which the necessity of the times compels traders to have recourse, to force sales, and may be considered as corroborative of the statements in our last Report, that to meet diminished means, the practice of introducing articles of inferior quality, is becoming increasingly prevalent.

Hitherto, notwithstanding the commencement of the war, commercial intercourse with the United States of North America has kept pretty open. Flaxseed has arrived in such large quantities, as will probably be nearly sufficient to supply the spring's sowing; and other articles have been fully commensurate with the demand. But it is uncertain how long this state of things will continue. Congress, before its rising, had some laws before them, to regulate the trade of neutrals, and to prevent the use of British licences: if they had passed, serious difficulties would have been placed in the way of future intercourse. The bills were lost, by a manoeuvre of the minority in the Senate. By their constitution, Congress, previous to a new election of the House of Representatives, must terminate on a certain day. When that day arrived, some members of the Senate contrived, by long speeches, to occasion a delay, till the hour of twelve at night arrived. Thus the bills were lost for a time; but as Congress is to meet early in next month, the subject may be expected to be revived; and it remains to be seen, what measures for the regulation of trade will be then adopted; in the mean time, great uncertainty must continue to prevail.

Exchange on London has, through this month, in Belfast, remained pretty stationary at $6\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. In Dublin, the currency was 6 per cent.

NATURALIST'S REPORT.

From the 20th February, to the 20th April, 1813.

During the late Winter, while the Continent of Europe, and even England, experienced an unusual severity of cold, Ireland, warmed by Atlantic winds, had ice for a few days only on the smallest pools of still water; the Cretan Rock Rose (*Cistus Creticus*), Sage-leaved Rock Rose (*Cistus Salvifolius*), Indian Chrysanthemum (*Chrysanthemum Indicum*), in the open ground; and the Day smelling Ceronilla (*Ceronilla glauca*), with the Great Flowering Edwardsia (*Edwardsia grandiflora*), and small leaved (*Edwardsia microphylla*), trained against a wall, are now in flower. Indeed, so mild has been our winter, that some Annuals, as the Maritime Stock Gillyflower (*Cheiranthus maritimus*), in favourable situations, have survived the Winter, and are now in full flower.

March 3, Barren Strawberry (*Fragaria sterilis*), and Two-leaved Squill (*Scilla bifolia*), flowering.

5, Blue Anemone (*Anemone Apennina*), Small Narcissus (*Narcissus minor*), and Dog's-tooth Violet (*Erythronium Dens Canis*), flowering.